

COGNITIVE BIASES

Confirmation bias



KEY WORDS

perception | opinion | information | beliefs



Have you ever found yourself convinced that something is true simply because it aligns with what you already believe? Maybe you love a particular food and search only for reasons why it's healthy, or you follow people online who share your exact opinions. This is all part of confirmation bias, a natural tendency that shapes how we see the world.

Did you know...?

Confirmation bias is the instinctive habit of seeking out and believing information that supports our pre-existing views, often disregarding opposing evidence. It feels reassuring to confirm what we already think, but this can lead to overconfidence and an unwillingness to change our minds, even when new facts arise.

For example, if you love coffee, you might search for the health benefits of coffee to confirm it's good for you, but avoid looking for health risks of coffee because it contradicts your beliefs. Similarly, on social media, we tend to follow people who share our views, and algorithms show us content that reinforces those opinions, deepening our bias.



Why it matters?

Confirmation bias isn't just about seeking comfort: it also affects how we make decisions, form opinions, and engage with the world around us. When we only consume information that confirms our beliefs, we become trapped in echo chambers, which can distort our understanding of reality. This limits our ability to grow and adapt in a constantly changing world.

What Can You Do About It?

- **Challenge your beliefs:** Intentionally seek out information that contradicts your views. This doesn't mean accepting everything you hear, but being willing to consider new ideas and challenge your assumptions.
- **Be open-minded:** True learning happens when we expose ourselves to viewpoints that challenge our own. Change doesn't mean abandoning your core beliefs, but refining them with a more rounded understanding.
- **Diversify your sources:** When researching, avoid searching only for terms that reinforce your beliefs. Actively broaden your inquiry to include a range of perspectives. This will help you see the bigger picture and avoid reinforcing your biases.
- **Engage in thoughtful discussions:** Rather than avoiding debates, engage in conversations with people who hold different views. Sometimes, respectful disagreement can help you see flaws in your reasoning, or even strengthen your stance when you back it up with more evidence.
- **Reflect on your biases:** Regularly ask yourself, "Am I looking for confirmation, or am I genuinely interested in the truth?" Being aware of your biases is a crucial first step in making more thoughtful and informed decisions.



Embracing Complexity

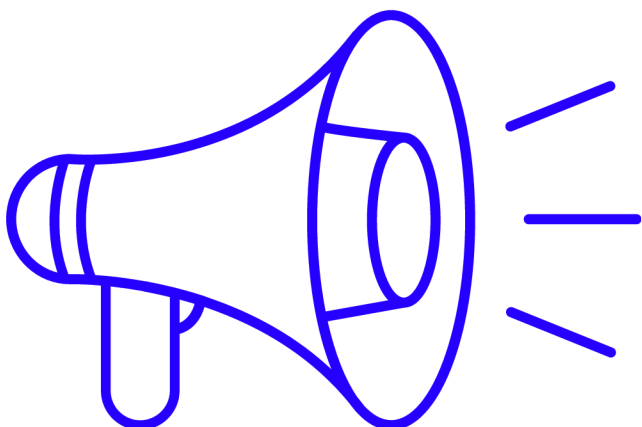
The world around us is complex and full of nuances. Often, confirmation bias leads us to take mental shortcuts, choosing the easier path, the one that reinforces what we already think. But truth is rarely simple. To grow, we need to learn to see things from different angles, listen to opinions that challenge us, and recognize that there is no single truth.

Start by considering that the beauty of critical thinking doesn't lie in trying to be "right," but in being able to question even what seems most certain. When we learn to doubt our own certainties, we open the door to true personal and collective growth.

Don't be afraid to explore what might contradict your point of view; it may be there that you find the key to understanding the world better!



COGNITIVE BIAS



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.